

was rich yet for our sakes became poor," and stepping down from the throne of the universe, laid aside his scepter and crown, turned his back upon his home and friends, and when here upon earth "pleased not himself," and so Paul felt that his disciple ought not to be self-indulgent, nor think too much about his own ease and comfort. He felt too, as he taught in later years, that real Christianity, true "charity, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil," and so the follower of the meek and gentle Saviour should not only be very slow, to take offense, but should always put the best possible construction on the conduct of others.

He was likewise convinced that a man ought not to "think of himself more highly than he ought to think," and therefore had no right to expect all his "hobbies" to be endorsed and adopted, and certainly ought not to cherish the spirit of "Diotrephes, who loved the pre-eminence."

These reasons, or others equally good, doubtless influenced Paul in his refusal to take Mark on their second missionary tour, and he seems to have been governed by the thought that "if a man deceives you once the fault is his, but if he deceives you a second time the fault is yours." He feels too, perhaps, that he had a right to expect better things of Mark, for his surroundings had been favorable to the development of a strong character. His mother was not only a Christian, but of unmistakable courage, as evidenced by the fact that she opened her house as a place for public worship in the very face of opposition and persecution. He was a convert of the Apostle Peter, whose example had taught him to suffer imprisonment, if need be, and the nephew of a man whose piety and consecrated liberality had made him famous throughout the church.

And yet in spite of all, he deserts his post of duty at a time when his presence and assistance were greatly needed.

So his name has come down through the centuries, branded with an ineffaceable stigma, for although he doubtless repented, and in after years not only regained the confidence he had forfeited, but was selected by the Holy Spirit to write one of the four Gospels, yet there is a dark blot on his name, and he is known among men, even at this late day, as the "quitter," the man who turned aside from the path of duty.

But that is not all, nor the worst, he has left in every subsequent age numerous followers who have been only too willing to follow his unworthy example.

The "Quitters" are in every community, and in every church. They enter sometimes with a great flourish and awaken high hopes in the hearts of pastor and people, but alas! the true character soon becomes manifest. Like Byends in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," they are much in evidence when the skies are cloudless and the fields fragrant with flowers and vocal with the songs of birds, when everything about the church is pleasant and prosperous, when the preacher is popular and the choir renders entrancing music, but they soon disappear when the clouds gather and trials come, or the preacher extends his remarks a little too long to the vacant pews which sit before him in cold, unsympathetic ranks.

The "Quitters," like members of other families, all resemble each other, and yet have their own individuality. One quits because the "members are not sociable," forgetting that "if a man would have friends he

must show himself friendly," and that few, if any, who show themselves interested in church work, are ever overlooked by pastor or people. Another quits because he "does not like the preacher," who has been unfortunate enough to say, or do, something that has given offense, forgetting that the imperfections of the servant can not release from responsibility to the Master, and that "He went into the synagogue as was his custom," although the services of the sanctuary were then conducted by the most imperfect and corrupt ministry that the world has ever known, perhaps.

If the sinless Christ could worship in a service conducted by imperfect men surely His sinful disciples ought to be willing to do so. If He needed the influence of public worship much more do they.

Another quits because "some member of the church has hurt his feelings," or offended him in some way, forgetting that it is both unjust and unkind to the Saviour, who gave His life to save sinners, to disregard His claims and desert His service because of the conduct of one of his frail, fallible servants.

Another quits because "the preacher is always asking for money," forgetting that the church, viewed simply as a police agency, pays, in the protection it gives to life and property, many times for all the contributions it receives.

But what shall be done with the "Quitters"? Paul and Barnabas were doubtless grieved by Mark's conduct, but they didn't stop their work because he quit. They went right on, believing that it is as important to "capture sinners as to coddle saints," and that it is as important to save sinners that are out of the church as those whose names are already on its roll. They didn't give all their attention to the man who quit, but neither did they forget, or forsake him, and after awhile, perhaps through the influence of his uncle, he comes around all right, becomes again conspicuous in the service of the Master, honored by the very men whose respect and confidence he had forfeited, and still more highly honored by the Holy Ghost as writer of one of the books of the Bible.

But the sad fact remains and will remain forever that he quit his post of duty, and so his name bears an ineffaceable stigma.

EVERY-DAY RELIGION.

We want religion that softens the step and turns the voice to melody, and fills the eye with sunshine, and checks the impatient exclamation and harsh rebuke; a religion that is polite, deferential to superiors, considerate to friends; a religion that goes into the family and keeps the husband from being cross when dinner is late, and keeps the wife from fretting when the husband tracks the newly-washed floor with his boots, and makes the husband mindful of the scraper and the doormat; keeps the mother patient when the baby is cross, and amuses the children as well as instructs them; cares for the servants besides paying them promptly; projects the honeymoon into the harvestmoon, and makes the happy home like the Eastern fig tree, bearing on its bosom at once the tender blossom and the glory of the ripening fruit. We want a religion that shall interpose between the ruts and gullies and rocks of the highway and the sensitive souls that are traveling over them.—Selected.